REPORT ON THE THREE DAYS STAY AT HOME EBOLA SENSITIZATION CAMPAIGN
(Ose to ose Ebola Sensitisation Campaign)

Presented by the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) and the Ten Registered Political Parties in Sierra Leone
1.0. BACKGROUND
Pursuant to Section 29 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone Act No. 6 of 1991, His Excellency the President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma declared a state of Public Emergency which was published in the Sierra Leone Gazette on the 31st July 2014 to deal with the grave health situation which has arisen as a result of the outbreak of the Ebola epidemic in our country.

In accordance with Section 29(3) of the Constitution, the Sierra Leone House of Parliament on the 7th August 2014 ratified the said State of Public Emergency.

1.1. JUSTIFICATION

Pursuant to Section 35(1) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, “political parties may be established to participate in shaping the political will of the people, to disseminate information on political ideas, and social and economic programmes of a national character, and to sponsor candidates for Presidential, Parliamentary or Local Government elections”.

In view of the above, the Commission in partnership with the ten registered Political Parties monitored the three days nationwide stay at home (ose to ose ebola sensitisation campaign) in the Western Area from 19th – 21st September 2014.

1.2. OBJECTIVES
The overall objective is to compliment the effort of government and its development partners in the fight against the Ebola epidemic.

1.2. MONITORING INDICATORS
To achieve the above, the Commission in consultation with the ten political parties agreed on the following monitoring indicators:

- The Role of the Police/Military in the exercise
- Citizens Compliance
- Operations of Volunteers
- Operations of the Rapid Response/Burial Teams
- Vehicular Movements
2.0. METHODOLOGY
Pursuant to its constitutional and statutory mandates, the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) deployed fifteen (15) personnel and twenty (20) political party members, two each from the ten registered Political Parties (All Peoples Congress, Citizens Democratic Party, National Democratic Alliance, Peace and Liberation Party, Peoples Democratic Party, Peoples Movement for Democratic Change, Revolutionary United Front Party, Sierra Leone Peoples Party, United Democratic Movement and the United National Peoples Party to monitor the three days nationwide stay at home Ebola sensitization campaign from the 19th – 21st September 2014 in Freetown.

Figure  Cross Section of Political Party Members with PPRC Staff and Security
2.1.1 THE ROLE OF THE POLICE/MILITARY IN THE EXERCISE

The Commission and the Political Parties note with satisfaction that the Sierra Leone Police and the Sierra Leone Armed Forces provided the enabling environment for the compliance of the three days stay at home Ebola sensitisation campaign in the Western Area. The presence of the police/military was visible in all areas with check points mounted mostly in the western part of Freetown.

However there were isolated cases of impostors roaming within communities and the streets.

2.2.2. CITIZENS COMPLIANCE

The Commission and the Political Parties observed with satisfaction the high level of compliance demonstrated by the people in the Western Area during the three days.

It is worthy to also acknowledge the active role played by the citizens in the identification of the sick/dead and the prompt notification to authorities concern.

However, it was observed that some people were not clear about the exercise as they had little or no knowledge about the process.

Figure: Cross Section of Political Parties with PPRC Staff and Security
2.2.2. OPERATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

It was observed that on the first day some volunteers were unable to start work on time due to the late arrival of sensitization materials.

It was also observed that some of the volunteers were not properly trained. Some of these volunteers were seen idling around; some saying they were yet to receive their logistics while others grumbled about the amount being paid.

Volunteers covered long distances on foot especially in the western rural area. There was improper arrangement in riverine areas to transport sensitization materials and volunteers.

Figure A: Volunteer explaining their constraints at Consider Lane
2.2.2. OPERATIONS OF THE RAPID RESPONSE/BURIAL TEAMS

It is worthy to note that the response of both the Rapid Response and the Burial Teams were very slow. According to citizens in most areas, it took two to three days before sick persons or dead bodies were retrieved.

It must be noted that when they responded, they took the necessary measures in protecting themselves and the people around.

Figure  Contact Tracer at Hastings explaining to the Team

Figure  SWAT Team preparing for operation in the presence of the Western Area Rural District Council Chairman

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2.2.5 VEHICULAR MOVEMENTS

It was observed that there were high levels of compliance by commercial vehicles and motor bikes. It was also observed that some private vehicles were plying the streets without having anything to do. i.e. some vehicles were without pass while some vehicles had pass but not everyone on board were with a pass.

However it was noted that there were so many vehicles on the streets that had little or nothing to do with the process.

2.2.2. THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

The Commission notes with satisfaction the role played by the media in the entire process. The media was able to dispel rumours during the process. Special commendation to the entire membership of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists, Independent Radio Network and owners of all media houses in Sierra Leone.

3.0 CHALLENGES

* Inadequate resources/logistics for Volunteers

* Slow response from the call centre especially 117

* Late retrieval of the dead

* Late response to the sick leading to an increase in the number of deaths in the country

* Inadequate Vehicles/Ambulances for Rapid Response and Burial Teams

* Late arrival of sensitisation materials for volunteers

* Inconsistent information dissemination on the Ebola Virus Disease
4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Areas of high risk (Western Area, Port Loko, Bombali and Moyamba) should be quarantined as was done in Kenema and Kailahun

- Taking of photographs of the sick and the dead should be prohibited to avoid stigmatization

- Political Parties should be included in all areas and given quotas as volunteers

- Rapid Response/ Burial Teams should be accompanied by the Police and houses temporarily quarantined as they await the result of the test.

- In the future, Political Parties, Local Councils, traditional leaders and village Heads should be involved in the recruitment and training of volunteers at community/ward levels

- Government should establish mobile mortuaries in various hot spots so as to prevent prolong stay of the corpses in homes while awaiting laboratory result.

- There should be an increase in security and medical personnel on the border areas between towns, districts and villages of the affected areas

- Increase in the number of medical personnel and response teams

- More toll-free lines should be established and existing once improved

- Structures must be put in place to ensure volunteers work full time

- Increase in the number of Community Surveillance Officers

- Medical structures must be put in place to attend to other illnesses in every community

- Vehicular and human pass should be restricted to relevant bodies/organisations

- Security personnel should be more professional in the exercise of their duties

- Political Parties urge Government to do more in ensuring we eradicate the Ebola Virus Disease soonest
5.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission wish to note with satisfaction the participation of the ten registered political parties in the entire process more especially in sensitising communities, pacifying citizens to release their sick and dead relatives to the medical and burial teams.

The Commission and Political Parties also note with satisfaction the role played by the Government and people of Sierra Leone, International Partners, Medical Practitioners and Health workers, Office of National Security in the management of the situation room, the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists, the Independent Radio Network, religious leaders, the Sierra Leone Police, Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, Guma Valley Water Company and the National Power Authority.

Political Parties wish to assure the Government of their commitment in the fight against the Ebola Virus Disease and also urge the Government to do more in ensuring the eradication of the disease soonest.
Community People Listening to Sensitization

Monitoring Team at Hastings

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